

My impressions from Ambassador of Hungary to the U.S., Dr. Szabo lecture



Ambassador Laszlo Szabo during lecture at UVU

The Ambassador of Hungary to the United States Laszlo Szabo gave a very impressive sales pitch for his country on November 6, 2018 at Utah valley University. It seemed rather blatant that he was avoiding speaking on the current issues the nation is facing which isn't surprising. Distinguished guest focused much of his presentation on the idea that Hungarians are extremely influential in the world at large and the United States specifically. Hollywood was a big portion of the presentation and the actors or directors that have Hungarian ancestral roots, in addition to individuals he spoke on the popular films that were filmed in Hungary like "The Martian" and "Bladerunner".

Ambassador Szabo did briefly touch on the historical origins of Hungary which from his perspective was dotted with conflict and constant oppression from different outside forces. In addition to the conflicts they have endured Hungary struggled for a long time with unemployment and a hurtled economy. The Ambassador Szabo spoke on this issue saying that while it was a very difficult time, Hungary has pushed through and now enjoys an unemployment rate of only 3.8%.

Then comment was made that Hungarians “used to have trouble finding jobs for all the people, but now they are having trouble finding people for all the jobs”.

While it was really interesting to listen to the Hungarian Ambassador’s perspective on the history and the current state of his home country of Hungary, it is important to remember that Dr. Szabo was essentially trying to sell his country in a positive way in these types of presentations. After going back over his comments and looking at different sources, I found that some of what he said was totally true and other things were totally omitted. The unemployment rate is in fact 3.8% which I found interesting and very impressive. But Ambassador Szabo did not however address the recent EU vote or any of the issues occurring with Ukraine.



I found it interesting to see how a politician can spin the current events in a positive light as a way of trying to appear in control of the situation. Obviously, there are some major issues occurring in Hungary currently but by speaking on those issues especially if those issues aren’t being fixed you appear weak and give the impression that you don’t have control in your own country. It felt like to me that Dr. Szabo was really trying to give the impression that Hungary is doing fine, and he wanted to remind us how much Hungary has influenced and helped the United

States. It was like a calm cry for help, trying to convince the world they are fine, but at the same time reminding us that they helped us in the past hoping that we will do the same for them.

Steven Thompson, UVU student